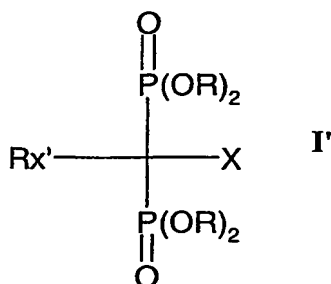


CLAIMS

1. A method for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis in a patient in need of such treatment which comprises intermittently administering an effective amount of a bisphosphonate to the patient, wherein the period between administrations of bisphosphonate is from at least about 2 months up to about 4 months.
2. Use of a bisphosphonate in the preparation of a medicament for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis in which the bisphosphonate is administered intermittently and in which the period between administrations of bisphosphonate is from at least about 2 months up to about 4 months.
3. A kit for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis comprising one or more unit doses, each comprising an effective amount of a bisphosphonate, together with instructions for intermittent administration at intervals from at least about 2 months up to about 4 months.
4. A method according to claim 1, use according to claim 2 or kit according to claim 3, in which the bisphosphonate dosing interval is from about once every 80 days to about once every 100 days.
5. A method according to claim 1, use according to claim 2 or kit according to claim 3, in which the bisphosphonate dosing interval is about once every 90 days or annual calendar quarter.
6. A method according to claim 1, use according to claim 2 or kit according to claim 3, in which the bisphosphonate is a compound of formula I'



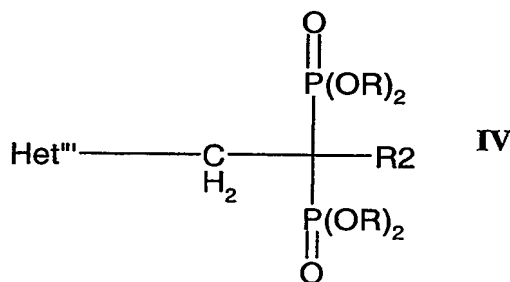
wherein

X is hydrogen, hydroxyl, amino, alkanoyl, or an amino group mono- or disubstituted by C₁-C₄ alkyl;

R is hydrogen or C₁-C₄ alkyl and

Rx' is a side chain which contains an optionally substituted amino group, or a nitrogen containing heterocycle (including aromatic nitrogen-containing heterocycles), and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof or any hydrate thereof.

7. A method according to claim 1, use according to claim 2 or kit according to claim 3, in which the bisphosphonate is a compound of formula IV



wherein

Het''' is an imidazolyl, 2H-1,2,3-, 1H-1,2,4- or 4H-1,2,4-triazolyl, tetrazolyl, oxazolyl, isoxazolyl, oxadiazolyl, thiazolyl or thiadiazolyl radical which is unsubstituted or C-mono- or di-substituted by lower alkyl, by lower alkoxy, by phenyl which may in turn be mono- or disubstituted by lower alkyl, lower alkoxy and/or halogen, by hydroxy, by di-lower alkylamino, by lower alkylthio and/or by halogen and is N-substituted at a substitutable N-atom by lower alkyl or by phenyl-lower alkyl which may in turn be mono- or di-substituted in

the phenyl moiety by lower alkyl, lower alkoxy and/or halogen, and R2 is hydrogen, hydroxy, amino, lower alkylthio or halogen, lower radicals having up to and including 7 C-atoms, or a pharmacologically acceptable salt thereof.

8. A method, use or kit according to claim 7, in which the bisphosphonate is 1-hydroxy-2-(imidazol-1-yl)ethane-1,1-diphosphonic acid, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, or any hydrate thereof.
9. A method, use or kit according to claim 8 in which 5mg doses of zoledronic acid or salt thereof (dose based on free acid) are administered once every three months.